

AIRGRAM

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SUBJECT: Ambassador Bowles Visit to Nkrumah

REF .:

Ambassador Chester Bowles and I called on President Mkrumah at Flagstaff House the evening of November 1, 1962 after I had arranged the appointment through Erica Powell that morning. The President met us alone in his office at 5:30 p.m.

After an exchange of reminiscences (Bowles was here seven years ago), Ambassador Bowles made several compelling points. He related a long conversation with Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin he had the day before he left Washington on his African trip (about October 14) in which he told Dobrynin the U.S. had some evidence that the Soviets were placing offensive weapons in Cuba. Bowles said Dobrynin was very upset to hear this and Bowles explained to Nkrumah that he thought at the time that Dobrynin honestly lacked knowledge of the Russian activities, since Ambassadors occasionally are not fully informed for tactical reasons. All of this, of course, developed the theme of Soviet stealth.

During this part of the talk Marumah went over to his desk and got the Cuban photographs I had given him several days before to show Bowles, since the latter remarked he had not seen them.

Bowles told Nkrumah that Russia was having serious difficulties both internally and externally, inferring that Russia backed off from Cuba because of problems rather than principle. He mentioned Russia's agricultural shortages, her difficulties with China and Albania and the tentative relationship with Yugoslavia, and her defensive obsession and consequently felt need for huge arms investments.

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W Mahoney Jr

William P. Mahoney, Jr.
American Ambassador

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